



Greetings

SIXTH ANNUAL WASHINGTON, DC POET LAUREATE'S
POETRY AWARDS

May 30, 2006

Exposure to the Arts as a young person often ignites a life-long love of music, poetry, dance and painting. Appreciation and involvement in the arts enhances self-esteem, promotes teamwork, provides motivation, and invites inspiration. The arts enrich the quality of life for all of our residents.

I am proud to recognize and honor the outstanding work of our young poets who participate in this Sixth Annual Washington, DC Poet Laureate's Awards. As E.L. Doctorow wrote, "Good writing is supposed to evoke sensation in the reader-- not the fact that it is raining, but the feeling of being rained upon." The skills our young poets are developing today will open the doors of opportunity tomorrow. I urge these students to continue writing, learning, and growing--the future of our country is in their hands.

On behalf of the city, I would like to thank Dolores Kendrick, Poet Laureate of the District of Columbia, and everyone who has made this celebration of poetry possible.

Anthony A. Williams
Mayor, District of Columbia

Greetings from Dolores Kendrick
Washington, DC Poet Laureate

The Washington, DC Poet Laureate Poetry Awards for Senior High School Students is the first of its kind in the history of the city. That makes this occasion special, memorable and historic. We hope that as time goes on these awards will achieve their place in the annals of art and education in the city. Emanating from the D.C. Commission on the Arts and Humanities, the Office of the DC Poet Laureate is committed to encouraging, stimulating and showcasing poetry as an art form within our community and to bring Poetry to the people.

This program focuses on our young people, many of whom are inspired and creative and who need diverse options in which to display their talent. The DC Poet Laureate Office as conceived by the DC Poet Laureate, Dolores Kendrick, will also serve the working poet within the community: those poets who have works in progress, as well as those who are already published.

With the support of the community at large, this office plans to stimulate poetry in our nation's capital and to recognize in a very special way the creativity amongst our youth, adults, and senior citizens, who with the help of other committed groups engaged in poetry, including teachers and mentors, reflect the words of Poet Gwendolyn Brooks, as they strive to: *civilize a space wherein to play your violin with grace.*

Dolres Kendrick Washington, DC Poet Laureate

Native Washingtonian Dolores Kendrick was appointed Poet Laureate of the District of Columbia on May 14, 1999, with a mayoral proclamation declaring it Dolores Kendrick Day. Ms. Kendrick is the second person honored with that title. The first DC Poet

Laureate was Sterling Brown, appointed in 1984.

The daughter of Josephine and Ike Kendrick (founder and publisher of The Capitol Spotlight newspaper), Ms. Kendrick authored the award-winning poetry book, *The Women of Plums* in 1989. A CD consisting of music based on The Women of Plums was released in 1996. Ms. Kendrick adapted her book for a theatrical performance in Cleveland, Ohio, and later at the Kennedy Center. The adaptation won the N.Y. New Playwrights Award in 1997. She is the author of three other books: *Through the Ceiling*, *Now is the Thing to Praise* and *Why the Women is Singing on the Corner*. Her work has been recorded by the Library of Congress for its Contemporary Poets' Series. Her CD *The Color of Dusk*, in collaboration with Wall Matthews, Composer, and Aleta Greene, Soloist, won rave reviews from music critics nationally. She has been noted as one of the top ten African American poets writing today.

Her rich history of poetic contributions to local and national publications has earned Ms. Kendrick numerous awards and honors throughout the country, including a National Endowment for the Arts Award, the George Kent Award for Literature, the prestigious Anisfield-Wolf Award and an invitation from the Chinese Government to lecture at the Shanghai School of Foreign Languages. She received two YADDO Fellowships, a Fulbright Teaching Fellowship and is the first Vira I. Heinz Professor Emerita at Phillips Exeter Academy. A portrait commemorating that achievement now hangs in the portrait gallery of Phillips Exeter Academy. She is one of the three women so honored. Ms. Kendrick was also one of the original designers and teachers of the School Without Walls in D.C. She is currently working on an adaptation of *The Women of Plums* for production at the National Theatre, and she was commissioned to write a poem to be included in a sculpture to be placed in downtown Washington, D.C. Two other poems appear on a sculpture outside the Metro Red-line Station at NY and Florida Avenues, and on a wall inside the Station. Ms. Kendrick was recently inducted into the International Literary Hall of Fame for African-American Writers, and the Washington, DC Hall of Fame and was invited by First Lady Laura Bush to participate in the National Book Festival 2001. She received an Honorary Doctor of Letters Degree from St. Bonaventure University in 2004. Working from the DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities offices, she can be reached at (202) 724-5613.

Sterling Brown

Sterling Brown is an African-American poet legend. Aside from a distinguished career as a professor of English at Howard University for fifty years, he also produced some of the finest epic poems, narratives, and songs in American Literature. His concern was the pain and triumph of African Americans in their daily lives and lore as they captured the whirlwinds of survival. Educated at Williams, Harvard and Brown, before his death at eighty-eight, Sterling received the Lenore Marshall/Saturday Review Poetic Prize and Honorary Degree from Harvard University. In 1984 he was appointed as the First Poet Laureate of the District of Columbia.

Gwendolyn Brooks

Without doubt Gwendolyn Brooks is one of the greatest American poets of the twentieth century. The first African-American woman to win the Pulitzer Prize, and hold the office of Poetry Consultant (now Poet Laureate) at the Library of Congress, Ms. Brooks' influence in the world of poetry remains unchallenged and without peer. Her distinctions include seventy-five honorary doctorates, the prestigious Jeffersonian Award (1994), the Presidential Medal of Freedom (1997), and the International Literary Hall of Fame for Writers of African-American Descent (1998). As Poet Laureate of Illinois, she established an annual poetry competition for young people designed to encourage the young in their aspirations as poets. (This competition is now thirty years in existence). She authored more than twenty books of poetry including *A Street in Bronzeville* (1945), *Selected Poems* (1963), *In The Mecca* (1968), and *The Children Coming Home* (1992). Reared and educated in Chicago, she was guest poet and lecturer at many schools and universities throughout the country. Because of her contribution to education she has been honored with a library and junior high school bearing her name. She died at the age of eighty-three in December 2000, leaving a literary legacy of fifty years.

E. Ethelbert Miller

E. Ethelbert Miller is a poet whose prolific work has had tremendous influence in the world of poetry. While his commitment to poetry and the poets whose talents make up the genesis of outstanding poetic works has contributed such milestones to the community as the Ascension Poetry and Reading Series, his writing has had a substantial impact upon the literary world. Such books as *Migrant Worker*, *Season of Hunger/Cry of Rain*, *Where are the Love Poems for Dictators?* and *First Light*, place him among the outstanding African-American poets currently in view. His anthology, *In Search of Color Everywhere*, was a Book-of-the-Month club selection. He has received many poetry awards and prizes including the O.B. Hardison, Jr. Poetry Prize. His most recent book, *Fathering Words*, was praised by Lori Tsang as "the paradox of life and love in this postindustrial diaspora that is America."

May Miller

Born and reared in the Howard University community of Washington, D.C., May Miller graduated from that institution. With the establishment of the DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities, she was named chairperson of the literature panel for three terms. She was very active in the poetry community in which she encouraged poets to continue their passion and work toward artistic development. Her books include, *Into the Clearing* (1959), *Poems* (1962), *Not That Far* (1973), and *Lyrics of Three Women* (1964). She died at the age of ninety, leaving a substantial heritage through her readings at the Library of Congress and the Folger Shakespeare Library.

*Schools Participating in the
Washington, DC Poet Laureate Poetry Awards for
Senior High School Students 2006*

Cardoza

Principal: Reginald Ballard

Teacher: Frazier O'Leary

Cesar Chavez

Principal: Garrett Phelan

Teacher: Adam Chiles

Duke Ellington School of the Arts

Principal: John Teyne

Teacher: Patricia Elam

McKinley

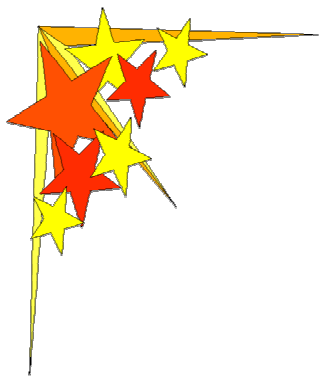
Principal: Daniel Gohl

Teacher: Angela Harriston

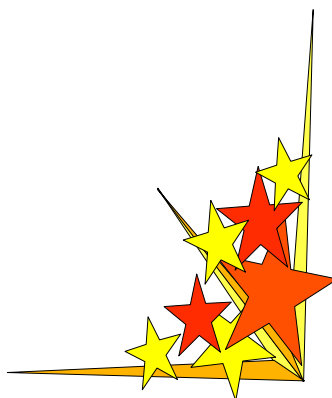
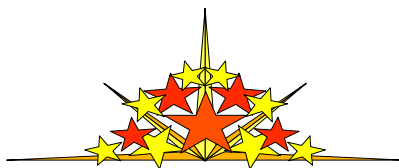
School Without Walls

Principal: Sheila Mills Harris

Teacher: Shari Vollen



Student Poems



Dolores Kendrick, Poet Laureate Prize

Ode to the Transfer

Rajon Jones

Cesar Chavez Public Charter High School

With ebony and ivory stripes
You are the zebra in my pocket safari.
In this jungle of greenbacks and miscellaneous document
You are intertwined-
You escape at just the right time everyday
To give me a way home,
I've lost you before, but,
I cherish you, and when I'm done with you,
I turn you into a vagabond
And gladly pass you on to the next man
So that you can take him places
Before your time is up.
I will never forget you.
You've saved me so many times
In so many ways,
You've saved the greenback forest of my pocket
And saved me from myself-
At times I almost broke curfew
But now I hardly get to see you
In my four door sedan.
You gave me the city through a stranger's eyes,
Some of the same people who breathe in the Ford's A.C.
Sat in bus seats where you've introduced us
There are millions of your clones,
But there is only one of you--
Your face is different each day,
With different combinations of days, years and numbers.
You have the same ability year in and year out,
Smart passes make students procrastinate
But you give your riders
An allotted time to complete their task-
You're not meant to play around
But if you do, the fun doesn't last that long,
So I guess I can feel safe calling you recess
And I miss recess--commuters have all the fun
While I'm confined to the leather seats of Mercury
\$1.25 could take me everywhere I needed to go a year back
but now I'm forced to feed the leviathan of Amoco.

Sterling Brown Prize

Experienced

Miya Upshur-Williams
Duke Ellington School of the Arts

I ain't no simple wood.
I've been there and seen everything.
Scrubbed and polished,
They try to hide my age and imperfections,
And, the fact that, with dirty feet, they walk all over me.

But I exist

I see these men.
Self-important.
Well protected.
Dead with ego.

I witnessed their deeds.
Their conspiracies.
Their vetoes
And, signatures to fix it all.

But they don't know.
See, I've been there before and seen everything.

I witnessed the fall harvest,
And heard the stories jump from the fire.
I saw them land and multiply like diseased rats.
I shook during the wars of flying arrows and erupting gun smoke.
I held the bodies of dark, dangling men,
And watched them jut and jerk like phone lines during a storm.

I felt the warm backs of overworked women, thickened with life.
I was pushed by the hurricane.
And strangled by harsh winds.
I was caressed by dry red clay,
And, hugged by the snow.

I've been there before and seen everything.

The Gwendolyn Brooks Prize

Epistle To My Unborn

Anthony Anderson

Cesar Chavez Public Charter High School

Since before my birth, I wasn't meant to survive here.
To the children I might have, this is for you to hear.
I apologize--
I may not be able to be on earth when you need me.
I won't be as distant as you think.
Plan it out,
Don't let any one irrelevant stop you.
Just stay focused and make your decisions logical.
Don't feel trapped, you always have options
And
It's only an opinion if they say its impossible.
In case you are confused about which path is wrong
Sit down,
Let your young memories pacify you--
I'll guide your hands along.
It's in your blood, your ancestors sweated miracles.
As life flashes
I can see it now--you're our mirror,
The bright side may be eclipsed, so let what is dim catch you.
We are Survivors.
I wasn't supposed to be alive to even have you,
Now it would be comforting to grab you,
Hold you,
D*mend to
Just imagine.
I dread I'll pass before you see my face,
Teach you to ride a bike,
Throw a ball
Or tie a shoelace.
Don't let the sins get you encased
Especially in a city where tomorrow's hunted
And gambled with.
I had to let you know you're thought of and loved--
Be safe.

E. Ethelbert Miller Prize

Soul Cry
Robin Williams
McKinley High School

My soul cries for the ones who
fail to succeed, who fail to achieve.
But it's only because they fail to believe.

My soul cries for those who died
losing their lives due to life's obstacles
And dirty old lies.
My soul cries for the one, who dies by the gun,
and the murderer who thinks he has won.

You're not old enough to vote, but old enough to fight in the war.
My soul cries for those who can't stand the petty fight anymore.
For those who want to stand in the light once more.
But they can't because their soul is hurt,
hurting to the core.

My soul cries for the little one who's fighting for tomorrow.
Wondering in the next few months, where will he be...
Where will he go?

My soul cries for the old, lying on the hospital bed,
Because of comas, cancer etc., thick tears have been shed.
Facing the fact that sooner or later, they will die.
For this reason, my soul cries

May Miller Prize

Your Eyes Caught Mines
Sarah Alpach
The School Without Walls

Your eyes caught mine
That one night
The windows were open
And the silken vaults
Fraught with purple-orange clouds
Tumbled in
Only to be swayed back out again
By the ceilings electric lights.
It smelled of metallic pomegranates that night
And the warm wind blew and ebbed
Across an eternity flourishing
Into something not quite dead
Or alive.
I didn't know what to say
When your lips
Curved into a smile
Wrapping about the ghostly embers
Of your thoughts
That I wish I knew.
I heard a voice so soft and echoed
Throughout the cold chambers of my head
I nodded to it
...No I didn't...
Did I?
Perhaps I did...
I can't remember
Your smile broadened in my confusion...
Not really remembering what you had said either.
I wanted you to hold me
I wanted to know what it was like
To be in your strong embrace
I remembered touching your arm once...
And how my skin twinged sparks
I wanted to know how it was
When I brushed my lips against your pink ones
Sensually closed my eyelids
Describing a melded embrace.
I wanted to feel your hand
Our bare skin fleeting and
Gauzing across each other fluently,
Your palm was more square, and a great deal stronger

Your Eyes Caught Mine
(Continued)

Than my weak, small hands
Yet we just smiled to each other
Maybe you were thinking the same thing
Maybe you weren't...
My mouth moved
I wanted to say it
Say the one thing that was
Only reserved for someone else,
Someone else, who seemed so distant now,
And you
So close
And you burned into my mind
The small word...
You
You
You
You in an everlasting way
I stared off,
Not really noticing the air incinerating my nostrils
And the tears would come
With pink and red sores fore eyes and nose
But not yet...
Not yet.

First Honorable Mention

Who am I?
Jazmine McDonnell
McKinley High School

Who am I?
Where did I come from?
What am I?
Are the questions often asked before people get to know the real me?
I am a strong, black warrior from the deep roots of Africa.
I originated from the greatest people that ever lived...
From Pauli Murray
Who was a lawyer, poet, religious leader, legal scholar, and author
To
William Simmons
Who was born into slavery then became a soldier and minister
To Nell Cecilia Jackson
Who was a pioneer in women's track and field.
I walk with my head high to show I am proud of my ancestors
I am an independent thinker that has a lot of big dreams.
I dance to the rhythm of my own beat.
I am about taking care of business in a timely manner.
I am an outgoing, funny, smooth type of person.
I am helpful and loving.
When you need a shoulder to cry on...
I'll be there.
I am full of happiness and joy.
I am a gift from the most highest God.

Second Honorable Mention
Lost in a Young Girls Memories
Angela Taylor
Cardoza High School

Locked in a dark room
Hearing the sounds of a young lonely girl crying on her
Pillow at night
As I look into her eyes, I can see a reflection of a young me
Not knowing what to do
I just sit there thinking to myself, is she crying because she's
Alone in this world
Going from living with some stranger in a foster home to
Living in a house full of love and comfort
While her mother's not nowhere to be found
Wondering why she never came back to get her
Leaving a three year--old in the world full of craziness
Having no one to run to when temptation has decided to take
Over
Sitting there realizing that I am this young girl crying on my
Pillow at night
Tears just flowing down my face as I see this young girl as a
Reflection of a young me
Not being able to do anything to take away her pain
Just sitting there, watching her live her life of lies and
Heartache
Staring out in space, looking up at the stars in the sky
Thinking maybe she just wants someone to love her, to be
That mother she never had
Telling herself that one day Mama will come back into her
Life
Still wishing that she could see her mother's sweet face,
As she holds her tightly in her arms as if it was the day of
Her birth
Not wanting to let her go
And now she stands here at the age of fifteen
Knowing her wishes won't come true
Thinking to herself, Does mama even love her or does she
Ever think of her baby girl and how beautiful she has turned
Out to be
Fourteen years without a mother in life and look how she
Turned out to be
But for now Mama's just kept in lost memories

Third Honorable Mention

Shadow Poem

Shamaya Fenwick

Duke Ellington School of the Arts

Lurking beneath the surface of my bed
Is a phantom, a specter that refuses to leave me alone;
To live in my dreams until the departure of the Sandman
Who has covered my eyes with his golden dust,
It is transparent like the heart of a false promise,
Broken like the columns of Frida Kahlo,
Standing crookedly at the age of an elder's teeth
With a smirk unlike any other, full of atrociousness
As I aspire to jump off my castle in the moat
Of my death; but it wouldn't make a difference because
That ghost is my Grim Reaper
Who bribed the Sandman to keep the sand on a little longer

Fourth Honorable Mention

A Beautiful Day
Zenani Bishop
Cardoza High School

Today was a beautiful day.
A simply beautiful day.
The sun glistened on my face
And to stay inside would be a disgrace.
It was a perfectly beautiful day.

I walked down the avenue and nothing, I mean nothing could take the smile from my face.
Warmed by the sun and the grace of God, I marched step by step towards the school building,
Met my friends and those I loved.
Regie, Buta, Nina, everyone was there and nothing, I mean nothing, could be said other than, "Damn, this is a nice day!"

Usually plagued by bitter weather, this January was sweet like honey on a summer day.
So, who was to say that today would be different from any other day.
I sat on the steps of Mama's house as my friends and I laughed and played.
We watched the boys ride back and forth on the dirt bike
And the sun made our blood boil
And we were happy because today was a beautiful day.
Te' was cute.
I watched him as he conversed with the neighborhood boys
And played on the big boy toys and today was a beautiful day.

Then under the gorgeous sun,
The gun spat rounds of fire that desired the life of someone
And all I could do was run
And tell Dave to hit the floor as we stampeded through the house's front door.

Was it real?
Did dem Jack boys really want to KILL, KILL, KILL?
Or was it just me?

I peered and looked through the house's front door window
To see if those killers made someone a widow,
To see if someone would see the face of heavenly angels.
Had they?

I ran and to my eyes' surprise

A Beautiful Day

(continued)

A beautiful young boy lay dying.

I held him
I cradled him
And begged him, pleaded him not to die.
I told him it wasn't his time
I screamed
And, without saying a word,
He died.
I touched his neck and said
Ma, I think he may have breath
Ma, I think he's got a pulse
And I sat there and watched that poor boy die.
The river ran thick and deep with his blood.
There was more on the ground than in his lifeless body.

And this was on a hot January day,
An unusually beautiful day.

It was a beautiful day to die.
I shook and wondered why.
But I guess God decided that this was his beautiful day to die.

My Perfect Day

Danielle Lopez Lezama
Cardoza High School

Imagine you and I...
Just imagine us sitting,
Side by side
Letting all the cares in the world
Just pass us by
That would be my perfect day

With no tears falling from your captivating eyes
And whatever little injustice I do, not followed by lengthy sighs
When your brightness brings me to life
And the innocence of your whispers
Is one of the things that holds me to you,
Love.
That would be my perfect day.

But alas, its never enough just to say how it feels,
It's never enough just to dream that you're real.
It's just my mind playing games
It's not a perfect life
And it could never be a perfect day
But for one
Just for the thought of having a perfect day
I'm willing to try.

What If

Michael Thomas
Cardoza High School

Sometimes I think to myself what if things suddenly changed?
Not just a little, what if it was a big range?
Like if white people started to get rhythm and were able to dance
And like if they started to care for blacks and give us a chance.
Or if we gave ourselves just a little more hope
And thought we could get money in ways that didn't involve rap, sports, or dope.
Or what if little black girls learned how to say their A.B.C.'s
Way before they danced like video hoes and before they were told they had A.D.D.?
What if white people had to live in the hood with roaches and rats?
And they are the ones killing each other with knives and gats?
What if we stayed out of gangs, and there were no bloods or crips?
And what if there were no black girls at strip clubs showing their bodies for tip?
What if there were more whites in jail then there were blacks?
And what if we gave each other a book instead of giving each other crack?
What if we got all the answers to our questions and stopped asking?
And what if we stopped saying what if and we started taking action?

December

Miriam Quardado
Cesar Chavez Public Charter High School

Your body lies without motion:
A horizontal statue.
The rough wind of your spirit lifts from the coffin,
And heaven reaches out a hand in welcome.
Your voice echoes through the hallways-
Your final steps of goodbye.
I look to the sky for a signature of hope,
Wait for you to take a breath
Wait for you to wake up
But the clouds roll in.
I store you in my deepest fortune box,
Accept that you have gone.
And when I feel your presence anew
It is just a drift at my window.

Dedicated to my cousin who passed away on December 8, 2001

The Portrait
Antonio Vance

Cesar Chavez Public Charter High School

Slap after slap--her dark red paint decorates the canvas, her bedroom walls.

The doorway frames the strict portrait of black eyes, a broken jaw

The paint is still wet and fresh between them.

If she addresses the painting it could make it even worse for her.

Terrance--the artist without a heart--

Uses his wife to show off his signature marks.

His hands travel across her face like brush strokes.

I, the stepson, know my paint will be next--

Slapped and thrown across the canvas of pain.

Ode to Elevators

Jose Vasquez

Cesar Chavez Public Charter High School

Nice Carpet
The best elegance
Transporter of images
The entrance and exit of a new world
The meditation room for human minds
A low and comfortable music coming out of the sky
Standing in the middle--
A moment of silence
A prayer
Of movement
Dice of air
Rising into space--
It can hit any number
A window of infinity
A star in the universe
The square shape
Travels like blood in my veins.

There could be more...
Chyna Allen
Duke Ellington School of the Arts

Never looking at the foggy smoke like clouds
focusing on the thick drops of rain.
The could be more spinning of my bedroom.
More cries of weekend babies after every
Deep white scream of thunder.
More heavy cold breathing winds
on the world's shoulder.
For I want the wind to make the trees shake,
nervously as I snatch away the leaves.
There could be more.
I want to crack the sidewalks and rip them
from the ground for the soil replenishes my earth.
Dig deep into the dirt where your inner seed lies.
There could be more so wash away your fear.

in your defense
Hillary Edmonds
Duke Ellington School of the Arts

you didn't know love, really
the tinman had more of a heart than you.

How come diacetylmorphine,
amphetamine,
dextromethorphan hydrobromide, and
d-lysergic acid diethylamide are all invited, and not me?

in tune with the codeine running track in your veins,
line 'em up and lace 'em, you'd say,
you'd take another hit
thoughtless to the other kids in the low-lit bathroom.

can I come to the party tonight?
can I come to the party tonight?
can I come to the party tonight?

no, you aren't as effective as the others

Untitled
Andre Gee

Duke Ellington School of the Arts

We rain on crows you couldn't draw
with a pen and a pad,
with tears proliferated into a body of work
too deep to wade in.
All of our fans drown, then the media says
we kill our people.

The Pianist

Anthony Harding

Duke Ellington School of the Arts

Sitting poised at the piano, her hands dance upon the keys
She lives for the art and lives a life of beauty
Spinning music as a spider spins an intricate web
Capturing minds like flies in a web of harmony
The music is an ocean that swells without calming
Tumultuous and wild with untamed rhythm
And as it reaches a peak it can't possibly surpass
The tide falls, graceful as an October Leaf.

Ski Houses
Vaughn Garcia Kerns
Duke Ellington School of the Arts

Never knew how fly she was until I couldn't have her
The queen who stitch outfits together like woven scenes
Offbeat like whites on African Drums
Same complexion as my father at times wondering recollecting on our fathers why
they leave us
Slight hair on her arms make her sexy when she pull her sleeves up
Baby teeth--her heart couldn't fear kings-huge 88' hoop earrings
Son brought her one too--
Paid her off like school supplies coppin pencils number 2's and Elmer's Glue
She don't remember tha Grime never seen it
She scope black history and Ars Poetika like a Zenith
That's my swordy--
She keeps a Razr phone where the sword usta be
Make up shields the sometime
I run--I mean ran rhymes by her decorated ears
Her frame small like a wallet portrait
Holes in her jeans' knees get displayed
Green and yellow ski shoe she got from her old boyfriend
Want her like nerds want J.R. Tolkien

Great Digression
Nyame-Kye Kondo
Duke Ellington School of the Arts

Vacant lots and Vacant lots.

The city's malnourishment

Magnified by the thing that we call gentrification.

Even the hippest of black spaces like Georgia Avenue, Petworth,
and African-American

Civil war Memorial are reflecting the ashy reality and

Deflecting its once rich past.

Call it the Great Migration if you like but I call it the Great Digression.

Untitled

Brittany Love

Duke Ellington School of the Arts

Your fingers playfully flicker over the strings.
Your song born from thin air.
You grip the curves of your guitar
As the song becomes more meaningful.

Steady gaze with hazel eyes.

Your hands move faster the longer you play.
Soon they hit a blur
But the music is still heard.
Adrenaline shoots through my veins like a drug.
With one breath,
I close my eyes.
My heartbeat coincides with every pluck of the guitar.
Suddenly, like the white lightning that strikes from the sky,
Your song leaves me in a flat line condition. Then, like someone yelled
“Clear!” your song continues.
His name escapes me but his song never will.
The song born from thin air.

Haiku

Dalila Scott

Duke Ellington School of the Arts

Her spikes are tethered
While gasoline is rising
So does your wallet

Timeless
Jeremy Bennett
McKinley High School

When I pause...

The world pauses with me.

It is a standing still pendulum.

Its hand freeze in the mist of time.

Its numbers show the years gone by.

Behind These Eyes

Tamera Lyons

McKinley High School

Behind these eyes is a soulless person
Who is yet to discover herself.
So many life changing events which have only lead to pain.
Everyday, behind these eyes, this girl hopes for a joy.
A joy that will be life changing.
These eyes are the face of a heart that was never whole.
These eyes hide the soulless broken-hearted girl.
These eyes show only the truth.
Not the smile
Only the
Eyes.
This girls hides behind her eyes, yet her eyes
Deceive you all the time.

Ode to the Archaic Tree
Jeremy Byler
School Without Walls

Darkness falls at daybreak.
Smog grips the gray atmosphere.

My breath grows short.

Once there was beauty;
Perfection in the world
What has happened to that day?

Once there was a being
Strong enough to hold off the haze;
A guardian from sickness and pain.

Industry found no gain,
And the old guardian fell in a daze.
Traded for market and feeding.

Dead fish oil in the bay.
Men's perception of nature cold.
Lost stewardship; forsaken duty.

I remember days of a different sort;
A day where the guardian held dear.
Now the old tree is archaic.

My breath grows short.
Smog grips the gray atmosphere.
Darkness falls at daybreak.

Free

Alicia Fields
School Without Walls

When I cry I cry for you,
Because you look like you cried enough to last an eternity and a day.
When I smile I smile for you,
Because I hope what they say is true and smiles are contagious.

When I take an extra step it's for you,
Because you look like you've been walkin' a while you took that extra mile in shoes
Too big for you.
Your life is slowly slippin'
But you can't miss what you've been missin'
Because you never knew what could've been
What would've been,
What should've been
You think you've made it when; you're back where you started with the
Heartless and the cold hearted who have nonchalantly turned their backs on you.
When you would've crawled to catch a crumb of their acceptance in a world full of
Facades so fake they might as well be built proof glass,
Because you can't get through them, or get through to them,
Whoever they may be... to let them know what you've been through
Will they condemn you for not trying hard enough to make the
Best of what you've got.
But do they know the battle you have fought,
With the ones you love, the ones you have and don't forget about the ones you hate
To love.
But the biggest you're fighting is the one you're fighting against yourself.
But you should be fighting for yourself.
But instead you're fighting for acceptance, that Lexus, that Benz, them rims, some
Timbs, that dude that will buy you them shoes, them jewels, that dress.
But aren't you making the best of your situation by using what you got to get what
You want?
What you think you need?
The material items that you see?
But too many material items just equal greed.
And all that life will do is surround you,
Try to drown you,
Try to kill you
And it won't stop UNTIL YOU,
Realize your eyes are the key.
You have to open them and see.
If you just open them and breathe
If you can home and believe.
Then I won't have to cry for you and you won't have to fight to be free!
Collapse
Austin Park
School Without Walls

Crisp detail blurring my mind
The beauty once seen is gone
Lost forever in the sea of gray
And nothing will ever bring it back.
Inspired and meticulous

Now has become fettered and ridiculous
It was there and now its gone
It was meant to be but I list it
So now the memories fade to black
Grasping at straws, hanging by fingertips
Slipping in to the abyss
The vivid and vivacious plan
Failed to reach across the span
My opus will never come to fruition
The decent world I wish to create
Is sucked into oblivion before it is formed
My creativity is lost and the thoughts are gone
The brightness that was once there is no more
Dimness flows inward to collapse my drive
A battle my imagination won't survive